

Recent heavy rainfalls have caused the level of naturally-occurring manganese to increase at the intake for the Lake Mooney Reservoir Water Treatment Plant in Stafford, VA. Lake Mooney services south Stafford. As a result, residents who live in south Stafford may have experienced discolored water in their homes this week. **THERE IS NO NEED TO BOIL THE WATER. IT IS NOT HARMFUL IF INGESTED AND IS SAFE TO DRINK.** The manganese levels have caused the water to have a yellowish color. Stafford Utilities staff have made modifications to our water treatment system to reduce the incoming levels, and crews are working to flush out the system as quickly as possible.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Is my drinking water safe?

- A. Yes, Stafford County's drinking water is safe. The Department of Utilities monitors the public water supply system daily and takes all appropriate measures to ensure it remains safe for human consumption.

Q. What areas in Stafford are affected?

- A. Southern Stafford County is affected. This is the area served by the Lake Mooney Reservoir.

Q. How does manganese affect the water?

- A. It causes the water to turn a yellowish color.

Q. What caused the higher manganese levels?

- A. Manganese is naturally occurring in Lake Mooney. Due to the recent heavy rains, the waters of the lake were disturbed, resulting in a high manganese content in the water entering the Lake Mooney treatment facility.

Q. What is Stafford County doing about the discolored water?

- A. Stafford Utilities staff has made modifications to the system to reduce the incoming levels. Crews also flushed out the system immediately after they noticed the increased manganese levels.

Q. How long will the discolored water last?

- A. The discolored water should dissipate completely within the next few days. The manganese levels continue to fall due to the adjustments staff have made in the water levels at Lake Mooney. Today, the levels are 0.01 parts per million, which is in the range of our typical level. Those residents who live closest to the treatment plant should already have clear water. It will take a few more days for the tinted water to work its way through the outer reaches of the system.

Based on tests this morning, the water is clearing from the Abel tank (Enon Road) toward Cranes Corner (Stafford High School). The area served by Grafton tank (around Grafton Village Elementary) still is tinted and is pushing toward Ferry Road where the water is most heavily tinted at this time. By tomorrow evening, all that should be cleared and only those at the very end of the lines should have any tint. The England Run, Stafford Lakes and Celebrate Virginia subdivisions closest to Lake Mooney should already have clear water throughout their portions of the system.

Q. Will the colored water stain anything in my house?

- A. When doing your laundry, it would be best to avoid chlorine bleach or bleach products as the chemical reaction can intensify staining. This weekend, wash your dark loads first and put off whites as long as possible (and skip the bleach), until there is clear water running from your faucets.

After-Hours Emergencies
Stafford Department of Utilities
(540) 658-4857

